



Beasley Neighbourhood Association

July 8, 2019

Mayor and Council
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

RE: Standing Together Against Hate

To Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Hamilton City Council,

The Beasley Neighbourhood Association stands in solidarity with Hamilton's 2SLGBTQIA+ community and all other groups who have been targeted by the hatred, bigotry, and violence that is festering in our city. For years, residents have identified Diversity and Inclusion as key values in our community, and as-such, we denounce the so-called "yellow vests" and their associates who have been spreading hate, harassing, and attacking residents at City Hall and other public spaces, including our public parks. These groups are spreading hate towards racialized people, immigrants, refugees, two-spirit, trans, and queer folks, and other oppressed groups. **We call on Hamilton Police Services, Mayor Fred Eisenberger, Councillor Jason Farr and his colleagues on City Council to take action to address the persistent presence of these hate groups in our public spaces.**

Our mission is to promote a strong, liveable community and to empower the residents of Beasley through community involvement. Some of our core objectives are to engage members of the community on Hamilton-wide issues and to foster a safe, inclusive community. We strongly denounce the incitement of hatred against our already oppressed and vulnerable community members. We hear claims that Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where inclusion and diversity are embraced, but question this reality when fascist groups organize weekly demonstrations at City Hall. When these same groups joined other bigots to attack our Pride celebration, Hamilton Police Services took far too long to respond. Then, they arrested four members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and only one of the individuals who was violently opposing the celebration.

We are especially concerned about the arrest of Cedar Hopperton. All evidence indicates they had not attended Pride, but they had recently publicly criticized the Hamilton Police Service at a public meeting where participants assumed it was safe to express their feelings and opinions. We are deeply concerned that this arrest was retaliatory. Cedar's incarceration is a disturbingly clear example of the systemic surveillance and criminalization of trans, queer and non-binary individuals; this systemic violence is also imposed on poor and racialized people. We are also disturbed by Police Chief Girt's suggestion that the police response to the attacks on Pride would have been more robust if the police had been allowed to set up a recruitment table at the event.

We are sickened by the City's inaction and the Hamilton Police Services response to these developments. We share the Hamilton and District Labour Council's sentiments, expressed last month:

The City cannot claim to be anti-racist while providing space to racists.

The City cannot claim that Hamilton is the best place to raise a child or grow old, when that claim only applies to CIS-gender, white people.

The City cannot claim that racism and oppression is unacceptable when its actions help to foster it.

The City cannot claim to be a "Sanctuary City" which would provide for newcomers' safety when they are clearly at risk.

The Beasley Neighbourhood Association expects more from our City's leadership and police services. We join the call for the immediate release of Cedar Hopperton. We applaud and support Councillor Nann and Wilson's call for an independent investigation into Hamilton's police response to the attack on our Pride celebrations, and we encourage our Councillor, Jason Farr, to join his colleagues in advancing this fact-finding effort.

We also share the Hamilton and District Labour Council's recommendation that Council 1) deny the ability of known hate groups to assemble on City-managed property; 2) develop a streamlined approach to developing and issuing trespass orders to those organizing under a banner of racism and oppression; 3) develop a streamlined approach to identifying hate groups for the purposes of enacting recommendations 1 and 2.

We join numerous other community groups who are actively urging you to take these issues seriously and immediately work toward the establishment of a City where all Charter-protected groups are ensured safety, respect, and justice.

Sincerely,



Alexandra Murphy
Co-Chair



Karlie Rogerson
Co-Chair